2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

lights; grain and flowers are also offered to the gods from time to time.

On either side of the altar are pigeon-holes, in which the 222 volumes of the Teng-gyur (the great Commentary on the Lamaist Scriptures) are stored, the actual scripture itself, the Kang-gyur as it is called (108 volumes), being stored in the upstairs room which we used as a bedroom. There are no chairs in the monastery, the Lamas* (here called Yukman) sitting cross-legged on planks on the floor, which are arranged in two lines running at right angles to the altar. The head Lama, or Dorje Lopön, has a rough sort of seat on which he, too, sits cross-legged. This, however, is raised a little above the level of the floor.

The main hall takes up most of the ground floor, but at one end there is a room, only about nine feet wide, which in addition to a small altar, complete with image, houses three enormous prayer-drums, which ring a bell each time they are turned completely round. These drums, or perhaps barrels would be a better word, are about ten feet high, and each is completely filled with strips of paper on which the magic formula *Om mane padme hum* has been written over and over again. One turn of the drum is equivalent to uttering this mystic sentence the same number of times that it has been written on the paper within. When one has nothing better to do, therefore, a quiet half-hour of turning a giant prayer-wheel is as good a means of acquiring merit as any other. People would often drop in at odd moments to do this.

The largest of the three drums had a rather elaborate top that projected through the ceiling into a small room above, which we used as a bathroom. This top was decorated with a muslin flounce of red, blue, and yellow and looked something like a rather dirty ballet skirt. When the drum was turned

*The term Lama should rightly only be applied to a monk who has reached a certain definite standing in the Buddhist church by reason of his learning and piety. It is extremely doubtful if anyone in Lingtem has any claim to this title; but since the term is commonly, though quite incorrectly, used by most Western writers to denote any Lamaist monk, and since the Lepchas themselves use it in this way, I have decided to follow the general practice.

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

finished all present went into the altar-room and prostrated themselves several times before the altar. The children, however, omitted this mark of respect. In one corner were two small girls aged about ten and twelve. They were lying on the floor with their knees drawn up, when the mother of the elder, catching sight of her daughter, told her not to display her vulva. This was apparently a quite ordinary remark, for nobody took any notice.

All this time the two Lamas continued to chant, while still playing their cymbals and drum. While this was going on Karma came in and placed a small bag filled with grain round the central neck of the *Go-sum;* he was very drunk at the time. The chanting and playing still continued, and now the *Go-sum* was turned completely round: it now had its back towards the altar. Pichi's mother pulled a few threads out of his coat and dropped them on to the figure. Now Karma took a handful of powdered maize and scattered it on the floor, in the form of a line leading towards the door. This was the road by which the evil spirit, having been expelled from Pichi's body, would finally leave the house. No one might cross this path; and if one wished to get from one side of the room to the other it was necessary to go round and behind the figure, thus avoiding the path. Several men, Karma among them, now lifted the *Go-sum* up and carried it out of the house, carefully following the line of powdered maize. The figure was taken to a spot about four hundred yards away, which had been previously indicated by the Lamas, a boy going in front with a lighted brand to show the way. It was there abandoned and would be eaten by dogs during the night. When it is found that an offering of this sort is not consumed it means that the demons have not accepted it, and that the patient will get no relief from that particular sacrifice.

Singing and drinking were continued throughout the night, but we left as soon as the ceremony was over.

We did not see Pichi for nearly a month, and by then he had completely recovered. He was fat and well, and had a

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

early arrival of the monsoon drove us defeated from the slopes of Everest.

During the period in which it is wished to keep the rain away the Lama must have no connection with his wife; nor should he touch water, but must confine himself to *chi* or tea. There is no harm in looking upon water, but one should on no account wash in it. The area in which rain can be kept away is the whole extent of country visible from the place where the ceremony is being performed. Thus, although Talung is not visible from Lingtem, Tafoor can keep the rain away from that place because the hills above it are visible.

When Tafoor was learning his period of instruction was terminated by a ten-day fast in a completely dark room, into which he was sealed by his teacher. He felt very hungry for the first two days, but after this he had no particular desire for food. He was not even allowed to leave the room for the purposes of nature and remained sitting in the so-called "Lotus position" for the whole ten days, telling his beads and meditating. As soon as the fast was over he came straight out into the living-room and no arrangement was made to accustom his eyes gradually to the light. He was given a little weak tea and some thin gruel, but even this gave him intense pains in the stomach. On the second day he had a small amount of normal food, after which he resumed his ordinary diet.

In offering to stop the rain while I went up to Talung, Tafoor warned me that his efforts might be completely unsuccessful, for he says he can only do it when his mind is completely in accord with that of the person who wishes the rain kept away; otherwise it will rain harder than ever. He is quite unable to do it for his own brother, for instance: whenever Chodu asks him to keep the rain away, and he has tried many times, it rains as though the end of the world is approaching. But he has never yet had a failure when asked by the Mandal or his senior wife. With others it is possible to ease the rain off sufficiently to make work possible, but not to